

Committee on Children

February 27, 2014

**John Bailey Government Relations Director
American Heart / Stroke Association**



American Heart Association | American Stroke Association

Learn and Live.

S.B. 229 "An Act Concerning Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention"

Senator Bartolomeo and Representative Urban, and esteemed members of the Children Committee, my name is John Bailey, State Director of Government Relations for the American Heart Association.

The American Heart Association would like to comment on S.B. 229 "An Act Concerning Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention." We believe this is a well-intentioned bill but look forward to working with the committee to ensure the legislation is effective and achieves the goal of increasing Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) awareness in youth athletics.

SCA is the leading cause of death in young athletes.¹ Most often, the death occurs during athletic training or competition². With that said, the incidence of deaths is in the range of one in 200,000 high school-age athletes per year, based on a 12-year Minnesota study of 1.4 million student-athlete participations in 27 sports.³ Although the frequency of these deaths in young athletes appears to be relatively low, it is more common than previously thought and does represent a substantive public health problem,

SCA is a condition in which the heart unexpectedly ceases to function. Often, this is because of ventricular fibrillation, irregular and rapid quivering of the heart's lower pumping chambers. When this occurs, blood stops flowing to the brain and other vital organs, causing loss of consciousness or seizure-like activity in seconds.

SCA is frequently the outcome of an underlying heart condition. It can also occur secondary to other conditions such as impact to the chest, heat stroke, asthma, drowning, electrocution, allergic reaction or medication.

It's important that sports organizations and league administrators train their staff, volunteers and coaches how to recognize SCA on the field and how to respond appropriately. Connecticut is

¹ Dreznier, Jonathan, et al. Inter-Association Task Force Recommendations on Emergency Preparedness and Management of Sudden Cardiac Arrest in High School and College Athletic Programs: A Consensus Statement. Heart Rhythm Society. 2007;4 :549-565

² Ibid

³ American Heart Association. "Twelve-step Screening May Help Reduce Sudden Death In Young Athletes." ScienceDaily, 14 March 2007

fortunate that coaches, who are on the sidelines at every game and practice, are required by the State Department of Education to be certified in CPR and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). This ensures that someone is trained to act in case of emergency, like a SCA, in the first critical moments after it happens.

The most effective treatment for SCA is quick CPR and defibrillation. Survival is directly linked to the amount of time between the onset of sudden cardiac arrest and defibrillation. Chances of survival are reduced by about 7 percent to 10 percent with every minute of delay. Few attempts at resuscitation are successful after 10 minutes.

The American Heart Association believes thousands more cardiac arrest victims can be saved annually if more lay persons were trained in CPR and if public access to defibrillation was expanded.

I look forward to working with committee on this piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John M. Bailey II".

John M. Bailey II
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